

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK 2010

As we celebrate National Nurses Week 2010, we mark the 80th anniversary of VA nursing. During those 80 years, VA nurses have shaped their profession as leaders, innovators and visionaries; and in doing so, they changed the face of VA health care.

No group in VA has more direct impact on changing the lives of Veterans we serve than VA nurses. During National Nurses Week, I encourage you to congratulate and recognize our VA nurses as they celebrate the week's theme "Nursing: Caring for a Healthier Tomorrow."

No one at VA is better prepared to meet the challenges of transforming our Department into a model of Veteran-centric health care for the 21st Century, than our VA nurses.

Everyone enrolled in our health care system — more than eight million Veterans -- is touched by a nurse. Our nurses are driven to continually improve the quality of care they provide and constantly seek out opportunities to obtain advanced training and education to improve their skills. This is why VA nurses are among the best trained and best educated in the world — and we intend to keep it that way.

We will recruit, develop, and retain the best workforce that VA can provide, and our nurses are our best recruiters. Their professional leadership, educational achievements, and clinical accomplishments make VA an employer of choice, and a place where nurses want to be to grow, excel and lead.

This week, we salute our VA nurses, all 77,000 of them for the work they do, the legacy of innovation and leadership they provide, and the leadership they bring to transform the Department. Most of all, we thank them for 80 years of dedication, sacrifice, and devotion to VA's mission and the Veterans we all serve.



Eric K. Shinseki